

Missoula Sawmill Site Wood Waste Reclamation Project
Presented by Chris Behan, Missoula Redevelopment Agency (MRA)

Buried wood waste a former lumber mill adjacent to downtown Missoula neighborhoods is generating methane at levels that create a threat to public health and the environment. If funded, this project will provide for the removal of the woody material methane source and its transformation into much needed and sought after growth medium compost which will to be used in the development city parks. In addition, this project supports local jobs in the excavation and compost production areas. Perhaps more importantly, it will be a model to address abandoned lumber facilities throughout Montana providing an avenue for a new Montana businesses and jobs.

The Missoula Sawmill Facility, a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Brownfield and Montana State Superfund Site, has a storied history. For more than 80 years, the 50-acre facility located in the urban core of Missoula was operated as a Sawmill. Logs were floated down the Clark Fork River, diverted into an onsite log pond, and milled to dimensional lumber. During facility operation wood chips were buried in the log pond and along the Clark Fork River. Estimated at more than 120,000 cubic yards, this buried wood is decaying, generating methane that is a fire hazard for structures adjacent to the site and those proposed on the site.

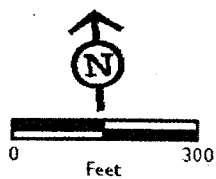
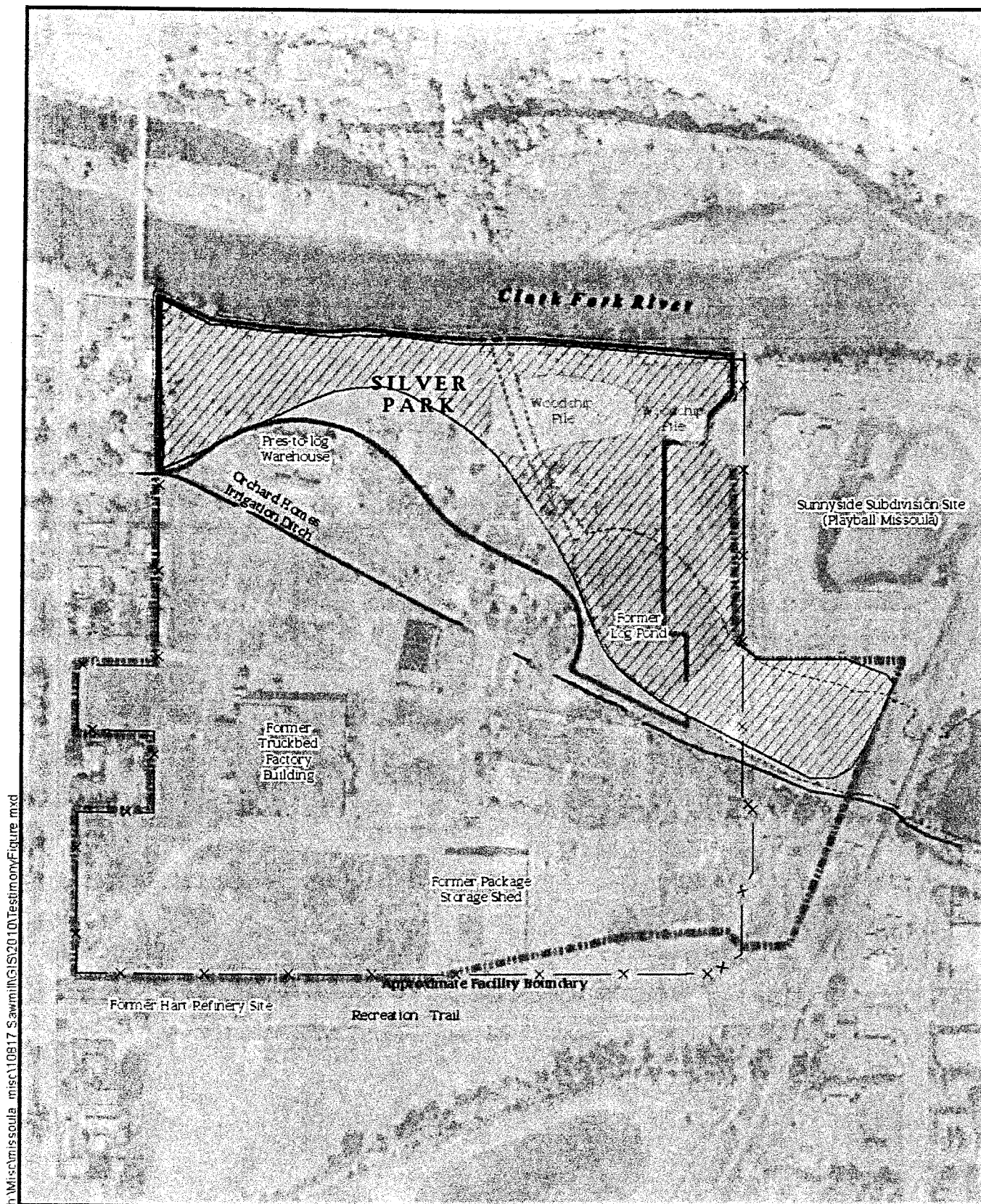
Little attention was given to these issues for many years. However, in 2006, the City of Missoula (City) and the Missoula Revitalization Project LLC (MRP), developers of a portion of the site, devised a strategy to revitalize the former mill. Titled the Old Sawmill District, MRP proposes to construct a vibrant, community-minded, mixed-use development, a portion of which is proposed on buried wood which generates methane. The City, in return for economic assistance, has secured 14 acres from MRP to develop Silver Park along the river, of which a portion has buried methane-generating wood as well.

In 2005, MRP submitted a Voluntary Cleanup Plan to the DEQ to address environmental issues including methane generation from the wood material. The VCP, approved by the DEQ in July 2007, proposes removal of approximately 40,000 yards of wood material from Silver Park and adjacent private lands to reduce methane risks. Instead of disposing of the wood at a landfill, the wood will be reclaimed as soil amendment by the City for use on City-owned parks. In return for the wood, the City will provide gravel to be used as backfill for the excavations.






Removal of wood and abatement of the methane is the last of the significant remedial actions required by the DEQ. The implementation grant is an important piece of the overall economic viability of the project and crucial to completion of the methane abatement activities required by DEQ. Excavation of the wood will be completed by MRP. The grant would provide funding to sort and haul wood to the composting operation, and to create soil amendment to be utilized by the City. Most important, the grant provides several direct and indirect benefits to the City, including:

1. Facilitating the full build-out of the development. The Old Sawmill District property is estimated to leverage more than \$200 million in private investment, and funds from this grant would complement others to complete additional remediation, infrastructure, and park development.
2. Furthering sustainable reuse of wood waste material. The project could become a model for recovering value from wood waste at former mills throughout Montana.
3. Leveraging of an additional \$460,000 of private and public investment which is crucial to complete remedial activities. To date, approximately \$2.4 million of USEPA Brownfield funds and \$1.0 million in private funds have been used to remediate the site.
4. Creating growth medium for use in reclamation and development of new and existing sports fields and parks. It is estimated that the wood material will create approximately 25,000 cubic yards of soil amendment and even greater amounts of growth medium for use in park reclamation. This directly benefits the City through reduced out-of-pocket expenses for topsoil and park irrigation.
5. Other environmental benefits include topsoil conservation and conservation of irrigation water. Topsoil would be conserved because the growth medium will be used to bulk the volume of existing stockpiled soil slated for development of parks, thereby reducing the demand on scarce topsoil resources. Use of wood-based growth medium on City parks will also improve the organic matter content of soils, thereby reducing irrigation demand on the Missoula Sole Source Aquifer, and reducing city operation and maintenance expenses.

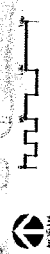
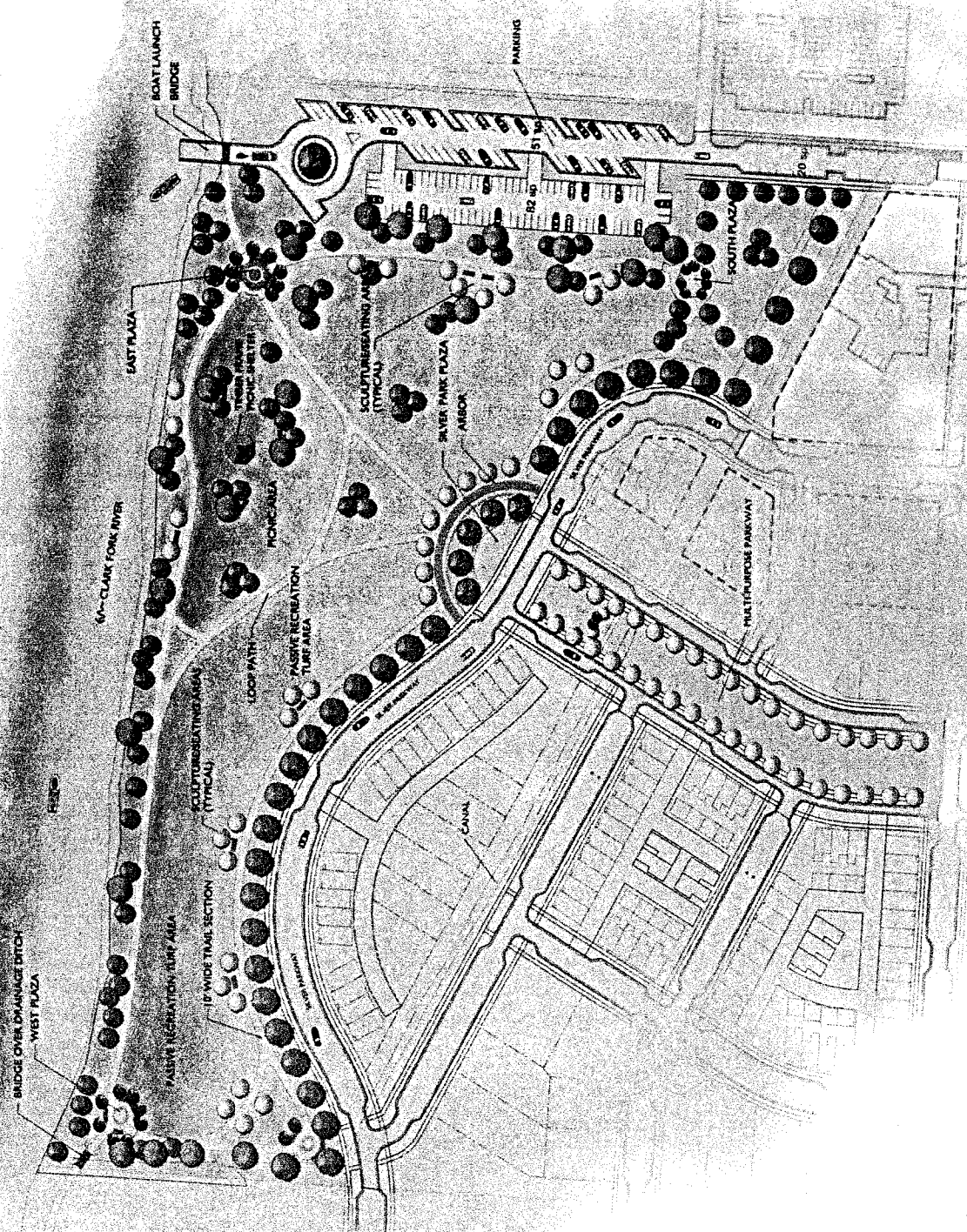
For these reasons, we encourage the legislature to approve the Implementation Grant. Thank you for the opportunity to present this project to you today.



AMEC Geomatrix

- X — Approximate Fence Line
-  Boundary of Future City Green Space
-  Above Ground Woodchips (To Be Removed)
-  Buried Wood Wastes To Be Removed (Approximate)
-  Proposed Area of Methane Modeling
-  Approximate Boundary of Missoula Sawmill Site

Wood Waste Removal Area
Missoula Sawmill Site
FIGURE 1



SILVER PARK

PRELIMINARY MASTERPLAN
MISSOULA, MONTANA

